

APPROVED: Meeting No. 20-89

ATTEST: *Sharon A. B.*

MAYOR AND COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND
Meeting No. 18-89

April 25, 1989

The Mayor and Council of Rockville, Maryland, convened in Worksession in the Council Chamber, Rockville City Hall, Maryland Avenue at Vinson Street, Rockville, Maryland, on Monday, April 25, 1989, at 7:20 p.m.

PRESENT

Mayor Douglas M. Duncan

Councilmember Stephen Abrams

Councilmember Viola Hovsepan

Councilmember James Coyle (arrived at 8:10 p.m.)

ABSENT

Councilmember David Robbins (travel leave)

In attendance: City Manager Bruce Romer, Assistant City Manager Rick Kuckkahn, City Clerk Sharon Gran.

Re: Worksession with Senior
Citizens Commission/
Rockville Seniors, Inc.

Jim Henry, Chairperson of the Senior Citizens Commission, reviewed issues to be completed in FY89:

1. Goals Force Task Force Report. The draft report of the Task Force did include recommendations of the Senior Citizens Commission.
2. With respect to the Victory Housing proposal at St. Raphael's site, the Commission will work with City staff to insure that publicity is done at the appropriate time and that Rockville residents are given first priority for the housing.

Other items of discussion were:

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1. Senior nutrition program at Rockville Senior Center. There has been some misinformation regarding the lunch program at the Senior Center; the City provides free transportation and the kitchen facilities at no charge.

2. Rockville Flag Day Ceremony. A similar program to last year's is currently being planned and coordinated with Jim Duffy, American Legion, and Burt Hall, Recreation and Parks.

3. Pre-retirement planning program for Rockville senior citizens. Tim Clarke, a Rockville attorney, will be helping to plan a seminar on this issue.

4. Medicare, catastrophic and other insurance counseling at Senior Center. A state grant is available for this program.

5. Senior shuttle bus. There are currently approximately 1,300 individuals registered in the Senior Center's programs, many of whom are dependent upon the bus for transportation. Frequent breakdowns of Bus 301 have caused significant delays and inconveniences. Ideally, the Senior Citizens Commission would like to have a replacement bus for 301 as well as a passenger van.

6. Production of video tape of services available to seniors. There is CATV money available, and City staff will assist in the production of a video tape.

Mayor Duncan noted that at the Small Business Roundtable, local businessmen have expressed concern with the part-time help situation. Seniors, who provide stability and have a strong work ethic, are ideal employees. Mr. Henry stated that they will be working with the Chamber of Commerce on a matching program.

Rosalie Campbell, Chairperson of Rockville Seniors, Inc., reviewed some of the current problems affecting seniors, in particular, the increasing real estate assessments. Councilmember Abrams asked if the circuit breaker law provided assistance in this area, and Ms. Campbell noted that it was helpful only to some seniors.

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Ms. Campbell asked for assistance in securing more visible directional signs to locate the Senior Center as well as a new sign in front of the Center. Mayor Duncan indicated that this would be taken care of. There was also discussion regarding more publicity for the Senior Center and its being a focal point for use by other citizens.

Finally, the Commission members expressed their appreciation to Rockville for its support for seniors, noting that Rockville's services to seniors are far superior to those of other areas of the country.

Re: Worksession with Sign
Review Board

Doug Worthing, Chairperson of the Sign Review Board, reviewed the frequency of requests for variances, noting that they meet every six weeks and generally have three requests which are primarily aesthetic in nature. Mr. Worthing indicated that the Sign Review Board should have latitude in prohibited areas and gave his opinion that freestanding pole signs should be cut back.

Discussion followed as to the Sign Review Board meeting with the Chairman of the Town Center Roundtable Subcommittee and holding a subsequent meeting with the Mayor and Council.

Re: Worksession with Advisory
Commission on Public
Education

Charles Haughey, Acting Chairperson, reviewed the Commission's activities. As far as Maryvale Elementary School is concerned, Mr. Haughey indicated that the Commission is working with the Board of Education to develop a viable program. Councilmember Abrams brought up the issue of minority test scores and how Rockville compares with the rest of the County. In discussing the issue of City resources, Mr. Haughey noted that the City may want to focus on children at-risk.

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Councilmember Hovsepian indicated that the Education Committee of the Community Action Board has been meeting with the Board of Education and that the Commission should keep abreast of what the Community Action Board is doing.

Councilmember Coyle discussed the formation of the Rockville Science Center, and the possibility that the Commission may want to work with the Science and Technology Commission on this project.

In response to Councilmember Coyle's statement regarding drugs in the schools, Mr. Haughey noted that a concerted effort on the part of the schools and police appears successful and that any additional involvement may be redundant.

Mr. Haughey reported on discussions at an all state forum he had attended regarding the relationship between business and education and that, nationwide, the adopt-a-school and partnership are two of the most popular programs. Insofar as the Rockville Chamber is concerned, he reported that they had tried a couple of times, but were not able to generate sustained interest. Mayor Duncan asked if the program with Richard Montgomery High School and the Rockville Chamber of Commerce could be revitalized.

Following discussions regarding executive loan and other new approaches to the business community's relationship with schools, it was agreed that the Advisory Commission on Education would meet with both the County and Rockville Chambers of Commerce and corporations such as GEISCO, Bechtel and Marriott to follow-up on this issue.

Re: Worksession with
Recreation and Parks
Advisory Board

Steve Edwards, Chairperson, and other members of the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board discussed the following items with the Mayor and Council.

1. FY89 issues:

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a. Richard Montgomery High School track. Funds are in the CIP for the portion of this project which is not being funded by the County.

b. Improving program information

c. Swim Center admission alternatives

d. Goals input/review

e. Fees review/approval

2. Current issues:

a. Civic Center use

b. Youth sports eligibility. The Board requested guidance from the Mayor and Council in this matter. It was discussed and confirmed that City-sponsored programs are available to all residents of the City and all individuals who attend schools located in the City. It was further discussed that while scholarships are available only to City residents, City staff would help locate financial assistance for those children who attend City schools but cannot afford the participation fees.

There was also discussion regarding Rockville Baseball Association's expansion and their non-adherence to established age guidelines.

c. Natural areas.

3. Future issues:

a. Facilities expansion.

b. Maintenance levels.

c. Tree programs

Discussion followed regarding holding future awards presentations for football, basketball and baseball at the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre or a high school auditorium. Additionally, the Mayor asked about the possibility of initiating a sports exchange program with another city in the United States as well as Rockville's Sister City, Pinneberg. Greg Bayor, Director of Recreation and Parks, noted that the

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Rockville swim team parents' club is in the process of planning a trip to Pinneberg.

Mr. Edwards complimented the Department of Recreation and Parks on their performance, noting that they handle an extremely heavy workload of events and activities and do everything exceptionally well.

Re: Worksession with
Traffic and Transportation
Commission

Andrew Johnson, Chairperson, and members of the Commission reviewed the following items with the Mayor and Council.

1. Review of Commission activities:

a. Civic Association outreach. The Commission has solicited opinions from civic associations and other interested parties regarding local and city-wide traffic and transportation issues.

b. Recommended West End Plan. Mr. Johnson requested that pages 104-129 of the NPAG Final Report concerned with traffic information be included as an addendum to the West End Plan. Mayor Duncan stated that a memorandum would be forwarded to this effect to the Planning Commission.

c. FY1990 Spot Improvements Program. Funds in the amount of \$17,000 carried over from previous years will be used for curb cuts/wheelchair ramps, which work will be scheduled to proceed immediately.

d. Review of FY1990-95 CIP. Mr. Johnson noted that the Commission would be reviewing the CIP and would forward their recommendations to the Mayor and Council by the end of May.

2. Future work items:

a. Neighborhood Traffic Control Policies. The Commission will be reviewing and making detailed recommendations as provided in the new ordinance.

In response to Mayor Duncan's question as to the Commission's working

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relationship with the Planning Commission, Mr. Johnson stated that they generally have a joint annual meeting. Discussion followed as to a review of downtown traffic flow, i.e., where Maryland Avenue dead-ends at Courthouse Square.

Councilmember Coyle noted that better signage is required downtown. Joe Cutro, staff liaison, responded that directional signing is a new CIP item and that the County has also initiated a new effort.

In response to Councilmember Coyle's question as to utilization of Ride-On, Mr. Johnson stated that the monitoring and tracking is normally reactive only.

Mayor Duncan stated that a future work item of the Commisison would be a new master plan involving transportation.

Re: Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council in Worksession, the meeting was adjourned at 10:00 p.m., to convene again in Worksession on May 1, 1989, at 7:30 p.m., or at the call of the Mayor.